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U.S. and Soviet Nearer Accord on New Embassies

Hays Inspects Moscow Site —Speedy Congressional Approval Is Expected

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build new embassies in Moscow United States and the Soviet Union have taken an important step toward agreements to build new embassies in Moscow and Washington.

The State Department has approved in principle a building site in central Moscow and has gained important Congressional support for the project.

Representative Wayne L. Hays, chairman of a House foreign affairs subcommittee on State Department operations, inspected the site this week and indicated in conversations with Russian officials that he was confident of speedy Congressional approval.

The Ohio Democrat came here on an unpublicized 24-hour visit, at the suggestion of the State Department, to examine the site and meet with officials of the Foreign Ministry, the city architect's office and the organization that provides services to the diplomatic corps.

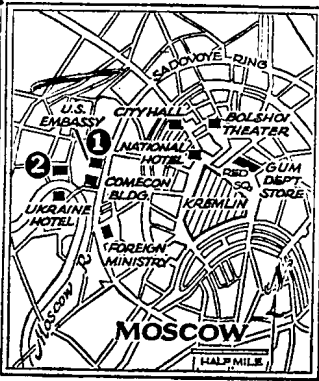
Possible Washington Sites

The Soviet Union is interested in one of two sites in Washington. One is an abandoned veterans' hospital on Wisconsin Avenue north of Georgetown. The other is the Tregaron estate in a residential section in the Northwest.

No full-fledged negotiations were possible, however, until the United States felt assured of a comparable location in Moscow. The stage appears set now for such talks.

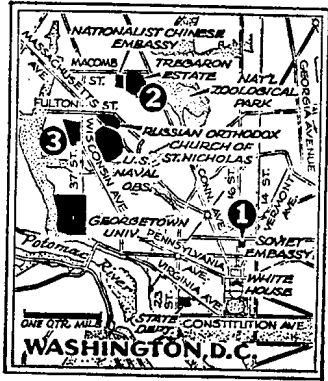
It is believed to be the first time in United States diplomatic history that the building of a new embassy has been subjected to protracted discussions on an exchange of sites. Americans and Russians have approached the problem with a keen eye on giving the other and no more than they thought they were getting.

The sites under discussion have been chosen to assure of reasonable equality in situation, size, and proximity to the Foreign Ministry or State Department and to the center of the city. Both sides appear to be satisfied that, given the dif-



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The present embassies in Moscow and Washington are shown by the numeral (1). Other numbers indicate proposed sites. The Soviet Union is interested in two in U.S.



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and Moscow, the maximum of reciprocity is guaranteed.

Desultory talks have been under way for some years. Both countries find their present embassies too small.

The new Moscow site is directly behind the present United States Embassy, a converted apartment building on the Sadovoye Ring, a principal traffic artery. The proposed site is a nine-acre plot sloping downward toward the Moskva River.

Next to Imposing District

Although now a section of rundown dwellings, the site adjoins a district that is being rapidly developed into the most imposing modern quarter of Moscow. Russian officials assured Mr. Hays that the immediate area of the proposed new embassy was included in plans for far-reaching modernization.

The most prominent structure near the site is the skyscraper headquarters of the Communist nation's Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, now nearing completion.

Plans for a new American embassy here call for apartment houses for all personnel,

a school and community facilities in addition to the chancery. The United States intends to keep its present ambassadorial residence, Spasso House.

An eventual agreement is expected to call for rent-free, long-term leases on the order of 75 years. Each side would bear its own building costs.

The new embassy here would be designed by American architects subject to Soviet approval. Russian construction crews would build the shell, under the supervision of American experts. Interior work would be performed largely by Americans.

The construction or remodeling of United States embassy buildings in Communist countries is done under the closest possible American supervision in an effort to prevent the installation of listening devices.

If an agreement is reached, five years are thought to be required from the architect's drawing board to completion of the Moscow building. The cost is estimated at upward of \$12-million. It would be the State Department's biggest foreign building project.